Raids by Railway Squad on touts

2226. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of raids carried out by the Railway Squad in different Zones to catch touts engaged in black marketing of rail tickets since January, 2001;

(b) the action taken against the touts;

(c) whether any action has been taken to check illegal reservation; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) 12585 checks were conducted against touts during the period January to May, 2001 over the Zonal Railways.

(b) Touts apprehended are prosecuted under the relevant provisions of law.

(c) and (d) In order to curb the menace of unauthorized sale of tickets, regular and surprise checks are conducted by the Commercial and Vigilance departments both in and around reservation offices at all important stations. Police is also involved in the drives against touts. Strict disciplinary action is taken against any railway staff found conniving in malpractices under the Disciplinary and Appeal Rules. Besides, during peak rush periods, monitoring at important locations is stepped up.

Wagons manufacture orders

2227. SHRI R. P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railway Budget for 2001-2002 had made provision of manufacture of 23,000 wagons, but the Ministry has not released any orders for them to the manufacturing units so far during the current year;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any representations have been received in this behalf from various interests, including the traditional engineering industries in West Bengal, where the wagon industry employing a huge labour force is mainly located and fear its cascading effect; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken/proposed to be taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. As against the Budget provision of 23,000 wagons in terms of Four Wheeler Units (FWUs), 17000 wagons were to be procured under Railways' own resources and the remaining 6,000 wagons were to be procured under Own Your Wagon Scheme (OYWS)/Build-On-Lease-Transfer (BOLT) scheme. All the wagon building units were having an outstanding wagon order of about 10,000 FWUs as on 01.4.2001 including 2,460 FWUs ordered under +30% option clause against 2000-01 contract both on private sector and public sector units. Another 2,000 FWUs has been ordered on railway workshops.

There is no demand for wagons under OYWS and BOLT schemes. Further ordering was withheld due to detection of the use of mild steel in place of specified corten steel in manufacturing of wagons necessitating joint comprehensive checks on all wagon manufacturers in order to assess the quantum and magnitude of the problem.

In view of the various representations received from the industry as well as Hon'ble Members of Parliament and to mitigate hardships to the wagon industry, delinking of ordering with the ongoing investigation is under consideration.